

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT BANGKOK 15527 ACTION SECSTATE INFO COMUSMACTHAI BKK
DIA HONG KONG AND PARIS 30 JUL 75

QUOTE

CONFIDENTIAL BANGKOK 15527

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TH, VS
SUBJ: THAI-SOUTH VIETNAMESE RELATIONS

REF: A) BANGKOK 13860; B) FBIS OW 2915334 JUL 75; C) FBIS BK
251426Y JULY 75

1. THEP KHEWAKUN, CHIEF OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIA DIVISION,
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA), TOLD A VISITING TEAM
FROM THE INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON REFUGEES JULY 28 THAT
THE RGSVN HAS JUST RELEASED THE APPROXIMATELY 100 CREWMEN
OF THAI FISHING BOATS CAPTURED JULY 7 (REF A). HE SAID
THE FISHERMEN ARE NOW EN ROUTE HOME IN THREE TRAWLERS.
THIS INFORMATION HAS NOT YET BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE.
THEP ADDED THAT THSI GESTURE ENCOURAGES MFA. HE BELIEVES
IT WAS IN RESPONSE TO THE RTG "ALLOWING" A TUG (SC-240)
AND ITS CREW, WHICH PANICKED AT SAIGON'S DOWNFALL AND
CAME HERE IN MAY, TO RETURN HOME IN EARLY JULY.

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2. WITH THIS LATEST MOVE, ALMOST 100 THAI REMAIN IN

SOUTH VIET-NAM. ACCORDING TO ICRC INFORMATION RECEIVED HERE SOME TIME AGO, THERE ARE ABOUT 20 THAI NATIONALS (LONG ESTABLISHED MERCHANTS) IN THAT COUNTRY IN ADDITION TO THE 75 THAI FISHERMEN HELD IN VIETNAMESE JAILS SINCE LAST YEAR. AS PART OF THE OVERALL ICRC EVACUATION EFFORT, THE THAI EXPECTED THEIR NATIONALS TO COME OUT ABOUT A MONTH AGO. NO ONE NOW SEEMS TO KNOW WHEN THEY WILL EMERGE.

3. THAI AMBASSADOR TO LAOS SAWET KOMANLAPHUTI CONFIRMED HERE ON JULY 21 THAT HIS EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN CHARGE OF CONTACTS WITH BOTH VIET-NAMS FOR SOME TIME. HIS OFFICE ARRANGED THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE DELEGATION'S VISIT TO BANGKOK IN MAY, A VISIT WHICH FLOUNDERED OVER THE ISSUE OF VIETNAMESE MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN THAILAND.

4. ON THIS ISSUE, SOUTH VIET-NAM HAS JUST APPLIED PRESSURE ON THAILAND ONCE AGAIN. ACCORDING TO HANOI RADIO JULY 29 (REF B), SAIGON SENT A NOTE TO THE THAI ASKING FOR A MORE COMPLETE LISTING OF "ITS PROPERTY" IN THAILAND THAN THE LIST THE RTG PRESENTED IT DURING THE MAY TALKS. IN EXCHANGE, THE RGSVN IS DANGLING THE UNTANTALIZING PLUM THAT RESOLVING THE PROPERTY QUESTION WOULD HELP IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES.

5. COINCIDENTALLY, WE WONDER WHETHER IT IS PURE ACCIDENT THAT HANOI HAS BEEN DEVOTING CONSIDERABLE RADIO TIME IN RECENT DAYS TO CONDEMNING SEATO AND THE U.S.-THAI NAVAL EXERCISE (SEPTEL), WHEREAS SAIGON APPEARS TO HAVE ISSUED ONLY ONE RELATIVELY SHORT STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT (REF C). SAIGON MAY MERELY BE FUNCTIONING AS HANOI'S UNOBTRUSIVE SHADOW.

6. COMMENT: AS WITH THE OTHER COMMUNIST STATES OF INDO-CHINA, THAILAND CONTINUES TO HOPE TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH THE NEW SAIGON REGIME. THEP CLAIMS THAT, AT THIS TIME, THAILAND HAS NO IDEA WHETHER THERE WILL BE SUCH DIPLOMATIC TIES IN THE EAR FUTURE, BUT HIS GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH SAIGON ON SOME LEVEL, WHATEVER HAPPENS. IN THIS REGARD, IT SHOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT TO DISCOERN THAILAND'S PROBABLE POSITION ON SAIGON'S AD-
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